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1900

July 24, 1900

"The Sermon. 'Meats which God Hath Created to Be Received'" The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 77, 30.

EJW

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The Present Truth.

A friend writes: "I am greatly interested in your articles on food reform, etc., but I should much like your exposition of *1 Timothy 4:1, 3, 6,*" and asks us to note particularly the expressions, "commanding to abstain from meats;" "for every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused;" "for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer." Several have expressed surprise that in our articles on the proper diet for man we have made no mention of this passage, and such others as *Romans 14:1-3*; but the reason why we have not is because they have no bearing whatever on the subject, and there is no occasion for referring to them. When, however, the question is asked, we are very willing to take time to consider their application.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.1*

In the first place, we hope that every reader of the *Present Truth* could conscientiously bear witness, that *verses 1 and 2* plainly show that we are not among those referred to in this passage. However mistaken any may think us to be, we trust that none get the impression that we are hypocritical liars, and that no one has found anything in the paper which he imagines can be styled "doctrines of devils." Faith in Christ will be found inculcated on every page, and that is the basis of all our health teaching.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.2*

As a matter of fact, the text in question needs no exposition, as it explains itself. It tells what certain ones will do in the last days. Who those people are, and just how they will command to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving, we

must confess that we do not know. But we do know that the advocates of food reform, and of a return to the diet which God prescribed for man in the beginning, do not come within the range of the warning here given.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.3*

It should be understood by all that in the Bible the word “meat” does not necessarily mean flesh. It is the old Saxon word for food of any kind, and is not in itself distinctive. Whenever the flesh of animals is referred to in the Bible, the word “flesh,” and not “meat,” is invariably used. For example: “God said, Behold, I have, given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for meat. And to every beset of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green, herb for meat; and it was so.” *Genesis 1:29, 30*. Here we see that the word “meat” excludes all flesh of animals, since flesh was not included in the diet originally designed for any of the lower animals, much less for man.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.4*

And this, by the way, has a bearing upon *1 Timothy 4:3*, since it tells us what the meats are, which “God has created to be received with thanksgiving.” One thing is most certain, that is that they do not include the flesh of any living creature. God did not create any beast, fish, bird, or creeping thing to be eaten; the only things which He created to be eaten are fruits and grains for man, and green herbs and vegetables for the lower animals; and therefore whoever advocates a return to the original, God-given food, is the last person in the world to be charged with commanding to abstain from meats which God has created to be received with thanksgiving.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.5*

But what about the statement that “every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused”? The connection settles that. The word “for,” which introduces the verse, shows that the statement grows out of the preceding one, and depends upon it. The term “every creature” in this instance is obviously limited to that which God created to be received. The warning is against those who command to abstain from food which God created to be received, which, as we have seen, does not include flesh; and therefore the subsequent

remarks must be within the range of that food. The products of the earth have been sanctified by the Word of God-set apart for the use of man; flesh meat has not been thus sanctified, but has been permitted as a concession to man's lust and hardness of heart.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.6*

Now that we have given that text all the attention that it seems to demand in connection with the food reform, we will notice one or two remarks that occur in a note accompanying the question. The writer says: "I believe I have in the past made too much of vegetarianism, but I do not do so now. When asked my reasons for abstaining from flesh foods, I simply state that what God first ordained for the food of man I find all-sufficient for me, and the most enjoyable.... I leave the side issues, and avoid contentions." That is good, and is exactly the position taken in this paper, except that we have never advocated "vegetarianism," and repudiate the name "vegetarian." We are Christians, and believe that we are saved by the life of Christ, when we give it free course in us. We know that nothing that we can eat or drink or do can bring Christ into our lives; but we know also that "fleshly lusts" "war against the soul," and that we may do very many things to keep Christ out of His rightful place in our lives; and inasmuch as every thoughtful physician will admit that flesh and all animal products tend to excite the lower nature, we submit that no one ought to lay this extra burden upon himself. It is not merely a question of health, although that follows right living, but it is one of spiritual-mindedness.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.7*

We also avoid contentions, for "the servant of God must not strive" about food any more than about anything else. The work of the gospel teacher is simply to set forth truth in all its fullness before people, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear," and leave them to do as they please with it. His responsibility ceases with the faithful delivery of his message. So far are we from "commanding to abstain from meats which God has created to be received," that we do not presume to command anybody to abstain from that which God has not created to be received. The Lord is our judge, and He is our Lawgiver, and for man to command, after God has commanded, is absurd presumption. God has shown us what is good, and has exhorted us to "eat that which is good;" and we are

content with simply declaring His Word. We have no controversy with any.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.8*

Our correspondent says further, in relating his experience: "I do not drink tea; coffee I may drink once in a year or longer, cocoa no oftener as a rule. I often long for coffee, but very seldom take it, as stated, as I detest stimulants, after the inner man, as I believe they somewhat dull the conception of glorious truths."*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.9*

That is exactly what they do. But the statement, "I often long for coffee," shows that our correspondent has not yet come to the Gospel basis of health reform. Healthful living is embraced in the Gospel, and a man's Christian life is his whole life, including every act, which, whether it be eating or drinking, or anything else, is to be to the glory of God. But the Christian life is not a penance; it is not a continual longing for forbidden things. The Christian does everything that he has a mind to do, yet he does nothing that is contrary to truth and purity, because he has the mind of the Spirit. When God saves us wholly from the guilt of sin, He saves us from the love of it, so that our heart and our flesh cry out for God, and not for anything that will dull our sense of His presence. In Christ is all fullness, and those who dwell with Him in the heavenly places are "abundantly satisfied" with the fatness of the house of God, drinking continually of the river of His pleasures.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.10*

The true health reform which we advocate, which consists simply in taking into the system nothing except the pure life of the Lord, can no more be a burden than Christ's life is. The gospel frees us from every yoke of bondage. The last thing in the world that we should think of doing, would be to deprive any person of any real pleasure or enjoyment. On the contrary, we hold out to people a way of life which is full of the joy of the Lord-one continual joy. To be continually longing for something, and to be fighting against that longing, is torture, and the Lord does not call men to the rack. He teaches us what is good, and then puts into our heart such a desire for the good that there is no room for longings after forbidden things. From personal experience in every wrong way of living, and also in recognizing and accepting only the life of the Lord, we can

testify that the pleasure derived from the very eating of proper, God-given food, together with the freedom from any anticipation of evil results, the perfect health enjoyed, and the sense of cleanness, and the higher appreciation of spiritual things, are beyond all expression. The soul that has been in the bondage of corruption, cannot, when once freed, easily be brought to long for its old chains.*ARSH July 24, 1900, page 467.11*

December 18, 1900

“The Sermon. The Labor Question” The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 77, 51.

EJW

E. J. Waggoner

The Present Truth.

Having had some personal experience in labor unions, workingmen’s associations, and of course in strikes, the question has come to me (because I have invariably found it that these unions bring about the majority of strikes, with the distress and hunger which always follow, if the strike is prolonged), What should be my attitude as a Christian toward these organizations?*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.1*

If I do not become a member I am boycotted, and have to suffer in that way.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.2*

Again, Why should Christians yield up all things to men of the world? Why should they not have a share in the blessings and good things of the world? Why should the devil have all his own way? Should we not fight him for some of the good things he seems to have appropriated for his followers?”*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.3*

I think that your question answers itself, even if we take so thought of the moral aspect of the case, even allowing that it is proper for a Christian to “fight for his rights,” what is the use of fighting a losing battle? You say that a prolonged strike is always accompanied by hunger and distress, and every account that I have ever read has convinced me that this is true; what good things, then, are gained by fighting?*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.4*

I have before me a Welsh newspaper’s estimate of the cost of the Taff Vale strike. It is put at £400,000, of which sum the men had to sustain upwards of three-fourths. I have not exact statistics at hand, but I am awe that no one who has given thought to the matter will

deny that there we very few strikes, even where the strikers gain their point, where the small increase in pay equals the loss of wages sustained in fighting for it. There is the loss of wages for weeks, and sometimes for months, to which is to be added the wastefulness and demoralization that always attend idleness. Often the strike is not for increased pay, but for fewer hours of labor, so that at best the actual gain to the workman is nothing; but if the strike for increased pay is "successful," many months must elapse before the sum gained can make up for the cost of the struggle to gain it, and often the lose is never made good.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.5*

But the majority of strikes do not result in securing the end sought, and the strikers, after being out of employment for weeks or months, go back to work on the same terms as before. Where then does the gain and blessing come in? No; on a purely selfish, mercenary basis, a strike is one of the most foolish things in the world. It is much like a man cutting his own throat, to demonstrate his right to live independently.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.6*

You rightly say that "trades unions" and so-called "labor leaders," are responsible for strikes and the attendant suffering. If these "labor leaders," who are such, not because they lead in labor, or ever engage in honest toll, but because they had labor and laborers into captivity, were themselves affected, by the strikes which they encourage or impose, there would be fewer of these suicidal struggles. As with wars, so with strikes,-they are rarely begun by the people, but by men who serve their own ends at the expense of others who are foolish enough to be controlled by them.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.7*

But you are questioning me concerning your duty as a Christian, and therefore we must take our answer from the Christian's Guidebook, without any regard to the matter of possible pecuniary gain to ourselves. Let no therefore take a brief, comprehensive view of the labor question as set forth in the Scriptures.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.8*

It is a popular error, fostered by many thoughtless Christians, that

labor is a part of the curse that has come because of sin. This is a grave error. Man was set to work by the Creator as soon as he was created. The command was: "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish [fill] the earth, and subdue it." *Genesis 1:28*. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and, to keep it." *Genesis 2:15*. Labor is a blessing, a privilege which makes man an associate with God, and which will be continued throughout eternity. Jesus said. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." *John 5:17*. The curse came upon the earth, making it less fruitful, and less responsive to man's efforts, and so more labor had to be expended for much smaller returns than before; but when the earth is made new again, and men are restored to the first dominion, "they shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble," for God's people "shall long enjoy the work of their hands." "They shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." *Isaiah 65:21-23*. ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.9

The earth is yet under the curse, but true Christians are not; for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse," and "if any man be in Christ; he is a new creation;" therefore Christians are to live in this earth the same as if it were already made new, or there had never been any curse. With them "old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new; and all things are of God." *2 Corinthians 5:17, 18*. God is sole ruler, and His Word is our sole rule of life. ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.10

Contrary to the lazy man's motto, "The world owes me a living," the fact is we owe our lives to the world. The Apostle Paul's words are true for all: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." *Romans 1:14*. If the world did owe us a living, and we were obliged to depend on it, we should surely die; for it would never pay the debt; it cannot give life. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." *1 John 2:17*. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (*Acts 17:25*); and since the life of the Lord has been given for the world, it is evident that that portion which in us belongs to the world also. ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.11

In order that the instruction from Scripture may be more impressive, and its practical necessity may be more apparent, I will quote for you a bit of an article by John T. Day, Editor of the *Shoe and Leather Record*, in the *Daily Mail* of November 15. Writing on the greater cost of producing boots and shoes in England than in America, he says:—*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.12*

For this lamentable state of things the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives is chiefly to blame. Its members are not allowed to do more than a certain quantity of work. Only a few months ago we had a lurid light thrown upon union methods in Leicester, where an operative named Shelton cut his throat rather than face the Union Committee, and at the inquest it came out that the charge to which he was invited to reply was merely that he had done too much work.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.13*

A pencilled scrawl addressed to his wife and found upon his body ran thus:—*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.14*

“Dear Emma,-Forgive me for doing this, for I should be spotted all the remainder of my life. God bless you all.”*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.15*

It is a well-known fact that the average laborer’s chief ambition seems to be to do as little work as possible in a given time, and not as much as possible, and that the trades unions are largely responsible for it. An active man is not allowed to do his best. Now this is in direct opposition to the Scripture injunction, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” *Ecclesiastes 1:10*.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.16*

This is not an arbitrary commandment, but one which, like everything right, grows out of the very nature of things. “In all labor there is profit.” *Proverbs 14:23*. This has no reference to pecuniary remuneration; the profit is in the labor itself. Labor elevates. Every man degenerates physically, mentally, and morally by idleness. A man who idles his time away, or who slights his work, or who purposely does less work in a given time than he is able to do, is sure to lose his manhood. Even though he get full pay, and more than pay for his time, he suffers a loss which nothing can make good. So far at least as any man’s own personal profit is concerned,

it would certainly be far better for him to labor hard for no wages, than to live a life of idleness with a regular income.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.17*

It must be remembered that we are not to “work for a living.” “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.” *John 6:27*. The Lord tells us not to be anxious about what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or with what we shall be clothed; “for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” *Matthew 6:31-33*. We are not to labor in order to get a living, but to labor because God has given it to us, and has said, “Six days shalt thou labor.”*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.18*

People talk about “receiving an equivalent” for labor; but there is no such thing as an equivalent for honest toil, whether physical or mental. No money can be reckoned in comparison with a man’s best thoughts or muscular energy. Labor is life, and money is not to be mentioned as an equivalent for life. If this be remembered, there will be an end of heart-burnings and jealousies because some one with no more ability than we, and who does even less work, receives greater pay. That is not our business. We serve the Lord Christ, and to Him we look for our reward.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.19*

“But we should be so oppressed that life would be a burden, if we lived according to this principle,” you say. “Employers would take advantage of it, and would not give us anything.”*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.20*

Well, it all depends upon whether or not the principle is correct. If it is, and it surely is, because it comes from God’s word, then we may be sure that God will honor it in us if we live by it. “I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor.” *Psalms 140:12*.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.21*

Now a word as to the ethics of strikes, beyond that which is settled by the labor principle already set forth. Suppose we are oppressed: the Lord tells us to expect tribulation in this world. “Do not rich men oppress you?” *James 2:6*. But “the just” do not resist, even when

condemned and killed. *James 5:6*. Jesus said: "Resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." "And if any man shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." *Matthew 5:39, 40*. You may say that that is out of date or impractical; but it is the rule for Christians, and we are considering the matter from the Christian's point of view.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.22*

"Love seeketh not her own," and "love is the fulfilling of the law;" therefore he who strikes for higher pay, even though it be justly due him, is violating the law of God.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.23*

Again, you ask why we should yield up all things to men of the world, and why the devil should have it all his own way. The devil never does have it his own way, except when we depart from the principles of Christ, to gain some of the "good things of this world." Satan once offered all the world to Christ, on condition that Christ would worship him. Christ would not do it, but chose rather to die, and thus He won the world. We may be sure that no man can get this world unless he does homage to Satan.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 803.24*

"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Every evil thing, every deed of violence that a man does, comes back upon himself. "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate." *Psalms 7:15, 16*. Striving and fighting for that which we desire to have will never obtain for us anything that is real and lasting.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 804.1*

While it is true that we are not to work merely for a living, it is nevertheless a Divine commandment that if a man will not work he shall not eat. *2 Thessalonians 3:10*. If a man, therefore, for any reason whatever, refuses to work when he is able to work, and there is work to do, he deserves to starve; and whoever assists or encourages him in his idleness is encouraging disobedience to God.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 804.2*

I know the plea that is often made by laborers: "We would like to

work; we have no personal grievance, and we have opposed the proposition to strike; but the strike has been declared, and we are obliged to stop work.” This shows the wickedness of the whole thing, more than anything else. If trades unions were for the purpose of encouraging laborers, of instructing them in their trades; of assisting them to secure work, and helping them when they are ill, they would be useful; but the fact that they tyrannies over laborers, and enslave them, and terrorize them, shows that they are wholly bad. We are not now making any plea for capitalists, as against laborers. They can take care of themselves, and need no help from us, although I must bear testimony that all attacks upon them, whether by word or deed, are wicked, no matter how oppressive they may be; but the great objection to modern trades unions, aside from the moral aspect of the case, is that they are the greatest enemies of the working man. Laboring men have suffered more from them than from oppressive employers. A labor monopoly is worse than a money monopoly.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 804.3*

The man who says that he is compelled to stop work against his will is as much a slave as the one who against his will is driven to his work by the lash of the overseer. Only in the latter case the man has been captured and sold; and so is not responsible for his condition, while in the former. The man has voluntarily placed himself in a state of servitude. Such slavery is utterly incompatible with Christianity; for “he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s free man.” *1 Corinthians 7:22. ARSH December 18, 1900, page 804.4*

We need not spend time to do more than refer to the wickedness of those who not only will not work themselves, but who, even with violence, hinder others from working. And what shall be said of professed Christian journalists who give countenance to such practices by stigmatizing as “blacklegs” the honest men who wish to obey God’s commandment to work whenever they can find work? The term is a disgrace only to the man who uses it.*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 804.5*

Finally, remember that it is not this world, but the one to come, that we as Christians are to seek. Let those have this world who will.

“What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” And it is certain that he who gains this world does so at the expense of his soul. Gain is not godliness; “but godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out; and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.”*ARSH December 18, 1900, page 804.6*

